



TOWN OF GROTON
Affordable Housing Trust



Becky Pine, *Chair*
Carolyn Perkins, *Vice Chair*
Phil Francisco, *Member*
Richard Perini, *Member*
Charles Vander Linden, *Member*

Regular Session Minutes

Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2023
Time: 7 pm
Location: Virtual Meeting held via Zoom
Members in attendance: Charles Vander Linden, Richard Perini, Becky Pine, Phil Francisco, and Carolyn Perkins
Referenced documents: draft CPC Response Letter for Housing Trust Funds Request
draft January 23, 2023 regular session minutes
draft February 3, 2023 regular session minutes

Becky Pine called the Affordable Housing Trust to order at 7:02 pm with full housing trust member attendance. Becky Pine noted that this meeting is being recorded. Cameras were turned on and members' names were displayed on the screen.

Minutes

Richard Perini moved to approve the January 25, 2023 minutes as amended. Carolyn Perkins seconded and the motion carried (4:0) with one abstention. Roll call vote of Perini – aye, Vander Linden – abstain, Francisco – aye, Pine – aye, and Perkins – aye.

Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the February 3, 2023 minutes with no changes. Charles Vander Linden seconded and the motion carried (5:0) unanimously. Roll call vote of Perini – aye, Vander Linden – aye, Francisco – aye, Pine – aye, and Perkins – aye.

Review response letter for final CPC application (Housing Trust Funds Request)

Trust members reviewed the questions asked by CPC members in their February 13, 2023 review and weighed the best response to make. Carolyn Perkins said Richard Hewitt asked how it would help our town to provide affordable housing beyond the expected Groton Farms additions. The draft letter addresses that question by offering demographics. Carolyn Perkins added that Anna Eliot seemed to suggest that the CPC might negotiate the grant agreement with the Trust. Carolyn Perkins said that if negotiation is wanted, it does not have to happen now and might wait until after the project is approved at Town Meeting.

Richard Perini advised the more the better on response letter details. Demographics builds the case and the more descriptive, the better for our application. Phil Francisco concurred with Richard Perini. Phil Francisco said that only a fraction of the Groton Farms units are affordable (25%). The Town is the beneficiary of how the Commonwealth attributes more rental units to the SHI but the public does not get all units as affordable. Charles Vander Linden commented that more is fine and suggested that the Trust go with the more comprehensive letter.

Becky Pine and Carolyn Perkins observed that the CPC wants a grant agreement for the Trust's application, but there are not similar concerns for the housing authority's proposal to evaluation the Nashua Road property. Charles Vander Linden said that the Trust will not gain by taking a dig at another applicant. All agreed with that statement.

Fran Stanley asked if the Trust wanted to keep the executive session section since all committees use executive sessions. Richard Perini responded that it is not worth our while to go into it so long as we follow the law. Becky Pine agreed that this section should be deleted. The group also decided to move the reference to the four (4) letters of support up to the top of the response letter.

Richard Perini asked if the Trust asked the Finance Committee for a letter of support since Bud Robertson, chair of the Finance Committee, spoke up in favor of the \$200,000 request at the February 6, 2023 meeting with the Select Board. The Trust did not ask for a letter. Since the Finance Committee takes a position on warrant articles before Town Meeting, a letter of support may not be the usual way for the Finance Committee to register their opinions. Becky Pine said that she would ask Bud Robertson about the timing of the Finance Committee taking a position on the Trust's warrant article.

Richard Perini moved to approve the response letter as revised. Phil Francisco seconded and the motion carried (5:0) unanimously. Roll call vote of Perini – aye, Vander Linden – aye, Francisco – aye, Pine – aye, and Perkins – aye.

As an aside, the group observed that the Groton Housing Authority received feedback recommending that the Nashua Road parcel studies be sequenced so that the 21E review comes last. No one wants to turn up hazardous waste that must be remediated, particularly if it turns out that the site could not support development. Carolyn Perkins thought that the housing authority should meet with the Planning Board to get a read on the allowed permitting.

Fran Stanley has asked for an update from Stan Dillis on the Fieldstone Drive parcels site investigations. No response as of yet.

Regular session meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Notes by Fran Stanley

Upcoming meetings and CPC deadlines:

Monday, March 13, 2023	CPC final vote on applications
Wednesday, March 22, 2023	tentative Affordable Housing Trust meeting
Saturday, April 29, 2023	Spring Town Meeting
Tuesday, May 23, 2023	Annual Town Election